

only will have helped to create an awareness of the importance of the new challenges, but also will have inspired people to work on collective responses.

We do not fool ourselves that this will create instant solutions. The problems we face will not yield to quick and easy answers.

But, we have made a beginning. And, as the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions celebrate their 50th year, we have rededicated ourselves to making these international bodies more responsive and more relevant to the needs and hopes of people the world over.

This will be the focus of discussions when the G-7 leaders meet in Halifax in June.

Canada has supported and will continue to support the United Nations in its efforts to tackle complex and interrelated global issues — issues such as those discussed at the Children's Summit, the Rio Summit on Environment and Development, the Conference on Human Rights, the Conference on Population and Development, and the World Summit for Social Development, and which will be discussed this September in Beijing at the World Conference on Women.

In mentioning the Beijing Conference, I want to underline one point that, frankly, cannot be overemphasized: the UN Charter's promise of rights and freedoms for all will not be fulfilled until the rights and equality of over half the world's population are fully recognized and respected in all countries. Canada is working closely with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to ensure that this message is heard loud and clear at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

By way of conclusion, let me say that while these conferences are important, they are not, of course, an end in themselves. They must be followed up by action. Meetings such as yours, which build on the work begun in Vienna, contribute greatly to this effort. I therefore wish to pay tribute to the International Centre and the efforts of Ed Broadbent, which have brought you here to discuss this urgent matter.

The goals of peace and security, development and prosperity are every bit as important and as relevant as they were 50 years ago.

I believe there is cause to be optimistic and there is cause to hope that one day we will clear away the ignorance and fear that breed oppression and abuse of human rights.

Thank you.